

# What is a colonoscopy?

**If you are scheduled for a colonoscopy, in order to better prepare you for the exam, it is important to carefully review the information and follow all the steps indicated below. This will position yourself for better results and avoid the requirement to take the exam again.**

## What is a colonoscopy ?

This is an exam that allows the doctor to visualize your colon and rectum using a camera. It is useful for your doctor to identify the root cause of your symptoms or to determine the presence or absence of lesions (tumors, polyps, inflammatory diseases, vascular abnormalities, etc).

The doctor may ask for a long or short colonoscopy depending on the part of the intestine that needs to be visualized. The administrative clerk will give you the instructions based on the exam required by the doctor.

## Why choose a colonoscopy?

Colonoscopy is the test of choice for detecting possible lesions of the colon. It also enables the ability to take tissue samples (biopsies) or sometimes remove the polyps (ball of skin) found. The doctor is available to give you any further information or clarification you may need.

In some cases, a radiological exam may be required to complete the colonoscopy. Sometimes following the removal of polyps or based on results, additional colonoscopies may be requested depending on the time required by the doctor to complete the exam.

## Not recommended when ?

Each case is assessed individually. However, if you are pregnant or think you are pregnant, please notify the nurse. If you have not already identified this, please contact the clerk who gave you the appointment

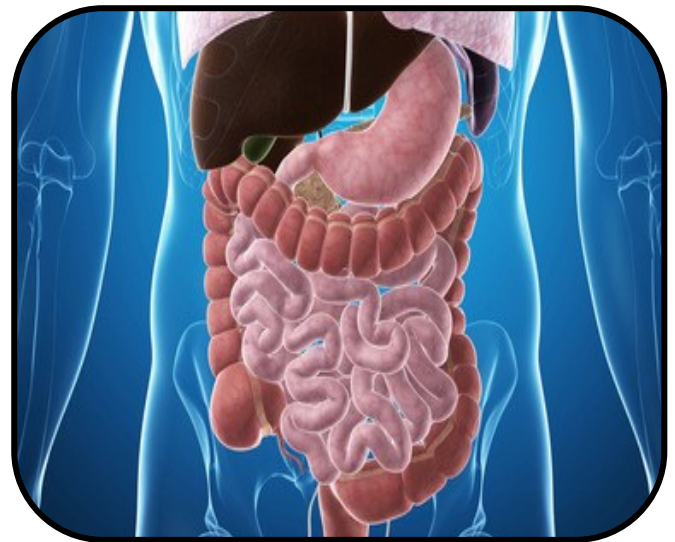
## How do we remove polyps ?

Polyps may have the form of mushrooms. Some unremoved polyps risk turning cancerous. They may be removed during a colonoscopy if the size and location permit. Sometimes this may have to be completed in a subsequent colonoscopy.

## How to prepare ?

The exam preparation you have been asked to complete will facilitate the flushing and discharge of your intestinal content. The colon must be perfectly clean, so that it can be visualized during the exam.

You must follow the instructions provided to you, otherwise the exam could be interrupted and you will have to reschedule it.



## How will the colonoscopy take place ?

Before you start, a medication will be given that will assist you to relax and reduce discomfort during the exam. The doctor will insert a camera on a flexible tube, the size of a finger through the anus.

During the exam, harmless carbon dioxide will be introduced to maximize visibility by unfolding the intestinal wall, which may cause slight discomfort. The exam lasts about 20 minutes, but a total of 4 hours is required.

## What are the risks ?

They are very limited:

- \* Bleeding: less than 1 case in 100 to 1 case in 200
- \* Breaking the intestinal wall: less than 1 case in 1000 to 1 case in 2000
- \* Other complications are possible but uncommon such as cardiovascular or respiratory disorders and infections.

Most often these complications may arise during the exam, but may occur a few days following (abdominal pain, red blood in the stool, fever, chills).

If you have any of these symptoms, it is very important to immediately contact the doctor who performed the exam. If unable to reach the doctor, contact your attending physician or Info-Santé: 811

## Instructions for the exam :

- ⇒ For your exam, please arrive at the designated time and department provided by the administrations clerk
- ⇒ Bring a complete, **up-to-date list of the medications** you are taking and your drug allergies



- ⇒ Make sure you don't forget your **health insurance card and your hospital card**

- ⇒ Make sure you have **no jewelry**, piercings or valuables with you. No monitoring of your personal effects in your possession during the appointment is offered by the hospital staff.



- ⇒ **Ask a responsible adult to accompany you home after your exam.** Due to the medication you have been given to relax and reduce discomfort during the exam, you will be unable to drive your car for a period of 24 hours.

## Instructions for individuals taking certain medications:

- ⇒ If you are taking **blood thinners** (Coumadin, Plavix, Pradaxa, Xarelto, Eliquis, Brilinta, etc.), follow the instructions you have received for discontinued use.
- ⇒ **Continue taking your other medications as usual** (including Aspirin and anti-inflammatory medications), unless otherwise advised by your doctor. On the day of your exam, take those medications with only a sip of water
- ⇒ Stop taking **iron supplements 7 days before** the exam
- ⇒ Stop the **fiber supplements (Ex Metamucil) 3 days before** the exam

## Instructions for people with diabetes:

- ⇒ During the preparation phase, frequently monitor your sugar levels before all meals, at bedtime and on the morning of your exam. Make sure you regularly drink clear, pulp-free fruit juice to prevent a decrease in your sugar levels.
- ⇒ Keep counting carbohydrates if you have type 1 diabetes with carbohydrate calculations. The doses of long & intermediate-acting insulin do not need to be adjusted.
- ⇒ On the day of preparation, only take half of your usual dose of fast-acting insulin or half of your tablets (day before the exam)
- ⇒ Due to fasting requirements, do not take diabetic medications on the day of the exam.
- ⇒ Request to schedule an early exam to allow you to eat after the exam and take your usual medications.
- ⇒ Correct hypoglycemia if necessary. Preferably, take one (1) tablespoon of concentrated non colored sugar (honey, syrup, candy). Regularly monitor your sugar levels.

## List of facilities — CISSS de l'Outaouais

- Gatineau Hospital**  
909 La Vérendrye O. Blvd.  
Gatineau,
- Maniwaki Hospital**  
309 Desjardins Blvd.  
Maniwaki
- Pontiac Hospital**  
200 Argue St.  
Shawville
- Hull Hospital**  
116 Lionel-Émond Blvd.  
Gatineau
- Papineau Hospital**  
155 Maclaren E St.  
Gatineau

## Contact person

The person who contacted you to make the appointment is:

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If you need to change or cancel your appointment or for any other additional information, please call the following phone number:

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